

REMARKS

The drawings stand objected to for allegedly not showing all of the claimed features. Regarding the system claims, figure 1 has been amended to show that the voice path can comprise digital signal processing and packet transmissions, as recited in claims 49 and 50. Support for the amendment is found at least in the claims as originally filed and in the specification on page 8, lines 1-5. Claims 40-48 and 50-52 are shown in the figures and description related to blocks 320, 330, 335, 350, 370, 375 and 380 of figure 3. Regarding the method claims, with regard to claims 27-30, the features are shown in the figures and description related to blocks 330, 335 and 350. The features of claim 31 and 32 are shown at least in amended figure 1. The features of claims 33-39 are shown in the figures and description related to blocks 370, 375 and 380.

As stated in the Regulations, "conventional features disclosed in the description and claims, where their detailed illustration is not essential for a proper understanding of the invention, should be illustrated in the drawing in the form of a graphical drawing symbol or a labeled representation (e.g., a labeled rectangular box)." 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). Many of the features of the present invention are best illustrated as labeled boxes. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

Claims 27-30, 33-36, 39-45, 48 and 52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 6,310,939 (Varney). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Varney discloses a particular method and apparatus for screening a call as the call is transmitted to voice-mail. The screening of Varney includes allowing a called party, who is a subscriber to a voice-mail message screening service feature, to dial a string code if she wants to listen to a calling party leaving a message on the called party's voice-mail. Col. 2, lines 56-59. To accomplish the screening, the system of Varney discloses the use of the advanced intelligent network (AIN), which includes service switching points (SSP) and service control points (SCP). Col. 1, lines 45-65. The disclosed switching system of the AIN also includes a service node

(SN). Service node is a term used by AT&T for a media server that provides certain functions such as specialized announcements, the bridging of conference circuits and out-dialing.

The claims of which recite “determining with a system independent of a serving switch a redirecting number from which the incoming call was forwarded”. As stated in the background of the invention, “switch vendors provide a screening function from a serving switch which alerts the user about a call intercepted by a messaging or attendant system, and allows the user to screen the call. The cost of this switch function, however, is typically prohibitive.” Spec. page 2, lines 23-26. Therefore, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Moreover, Varney does not disclose the claimed “one-way voice path connecting the forwarded call to the second call”. In Varney, “the SN 300 bridges the called party on to the call between the calling party at station 12 and the voice mail system 500. While the calls are bridged, the SN 300 monitors the called party’s leg of the call for spoken word.” Col. 3, lines 2-5. Varney does not disclose establishing a one-way connection between the called party and calling party line. This two-way connection can be undesirable because, even if the called party does not speak while listening to the calling party leave a message, the calling party could still hear background noise, breathing, etc, and know that someone is listening to them leave a message. Therefore, for at least this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 31 and 49 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Varney in view of the instant application. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 31 depends from claim 27 as amended and claim 49 depends from claim 40 as amended, and therefore include all of the features of the respective claims, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with regard to claims 27 and 40, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 31 and 49 as be withdrawn.

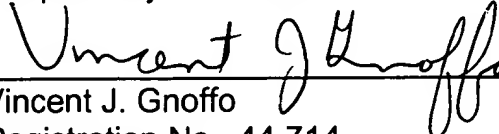
Claims 32, 37-38, 46-47, and 50-51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Varney in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0108172 to Petty et al. With respect to claims 37-38 and 46-47, it was alleged that the making of an integral device separable or vice-a-versa carries no patentable weight. With respect to claim 51 it was alleged that such a limitation is inherent in Petty et al. and read on the notoriously old in the art hook-flash. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Petty et al. purports to disclose Internet call waiting with voicemail system that provides monitoring during recording. The caller is prompted to leave a voice message and the voice message is relayed in real-time over the Internet connection to permit the subscriber to monitor the message. The subscriber can choose to answer the call before the caller disconnects. Calls can be forwarded, directed to VOIP, or the Internet connection may be dropped and the call completed to the subscriber's directory number. See Abstract.

Neither Varney, as discussed above, nor Petty et al., disclose or suggest, alone or in combination, the claimed features of "determining with a system independent of a serving switch a redirecting number from which the incoming call was forwarded" and "establishing a one-way voice path connecting the forwarded call to the second call", recited in the independent claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

For at least all of the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4224 if there are any outstanding issues that could be resolved through a telephone conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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